DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 455 912 PS 029 625

AUTHOR Newman, Rita, Ed.; Hearron, Patricia, Ed.
TITLE Focus on Pre-K & K, Ages 4-6: A Quarterly Newsletter for the Education Community, 1999-2000.
INSTITUTION Association for Childhood Education International, Olney, MD.
PUB DATE 2000-00-00
NOTE 34p.
AVAILABLE FROM Association for Childhood Education International, 17904 Georgia Avenue, Suite 215, Olney, MD 20832.
PUB TYPE Collected Works - Serials (022)
JOURNAL CIT Focus on Pre-K & K; v12 n1-4 Fall 1999-Sum 2000
EDRS PRICE EDRS Price MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Art Education; Books; *Child Abuse; Childrens Literature; Class Activities; *Computer Uses in Education; *Early Childhood Education; Internet; Kindergarten; Learning Activities; Multiple Intelligences; Newsletters; *Play; Preschool Curriculum; *State Standards

ABSTRACT

These four quarterly newsletter issues address various topics of interest to teachers of young children. Each issue features articles on a specific theme, along with regular columns. The Fall 1999 issue focuses on curricula that emphasize the value of authentic learning and describes a project on community helpers as it evolved in a kindergarten classroom. A second article explains how teachers can shape school to fit the individual child by combining selected picture books with meaningful activities. The Winter 1999 issue focuses on using computers in kindergarten, suggesting that computer applications are best viewed as languages. A second article focuses on computers as tools for enhancing academic skills. The executive board vice president's column discusses international cooperation among early childhood practitioners. The Spring 2000 issue focuses on applying research findings in the classroom. One article demonstrates how a play-based K-1 multiage classroom met rigorous state standards. A second article discusses how 4- and 5-year-olds can respond to and learn from art and art history. The Summer 2000 issue addresses the implications of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse of young children. The first article provides a definition of child abuse, offers guidance for educators, and discusses educational implications. The vice president's column presents information on educational systems in Finland and New Zealand. (KB)

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Focus on Pre-K & K, Ages 4-6 : A Quarterly Newsletter for the Education Community

by Rita Newman, Ed.
& Patricia Hearron, Ed.

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Fall 1999 • Vol. 12, No. 1

Focus On Pre-K & K

ages 4-6

A Quarterly Newsletter for the Education Community

From the Editors

As the editors of the *Focus on Pre-K & K*, our goal is to publish articles that will challenge you to investigate the most appropriate and effective ways to teach young children in prekindergarten and kindergarten. This newsletter begins the school year with a focus on curriculum. The first article emphasizes the value of authentic learning—in contrast to "cute" activities—and describes a project on "community helpers" as it evolved in the kindergarten classroom of one of the authors.

The second article explains how teachers can shape school to fit the individual child by combining thoughtfully chosen picture books with meaningful activities. Drawing on Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences, the concept of invitations to literacy, and recent research on brain development, the author provides several practical suggestions for activities in connection with many fine examples of children's literature.

We need more suggestions of what you would like in future issues of *Focus on Pre-K & K*. Readers have expressed interest in articles on the use of computers in

continued on page 3 . . .

Isn't That Cute?

Transforming the Cute Curriculum Into Authentic Learning

Lynn Kirkland, University of Alabama at Birmingham
Jerry Aldridge, University of Alabama at Birmingham
Patricia Kuby, Athens State University

Twenty-five years ago James Hymes, Jr. (1974), told early childhood educators that "cute" was a four-letter word. Unfortunately, the "cute curriculum" still exists in many programs. In the everyday world of many preschool and kindergarten classrooms, "many of the noneducative and miseducative activities . . . can be categorized in a single word—cute" (Jalongo, 1996, p. 67). This article will address three questions related to the cute curriculum: 1) What is the cute curriculum? 2) What is an example of the cute curriculum?, and 3) How can we transform the cute curriculum into authentic learning experiences?

What Is the Cute Curriculum?

For the purpose of this article, the cute curriculum is defined as pedagogical activities that teachers implement because of their mistaken notions of what children find appealing. Cute activities are used as a candy coating for the bits of knowledge teachers believe they need to transmit. These activities have no intrinsic connection to the topic being studied. The cute curriculum is most noted for its lack of content and process. Little consideration is paid to children's backgrounds, prior knowledge, the real world, or the purpose of the study unit. While some units are more worthy than others, it is most often not the topic that makes a cute curriculum, but rather what the students are asked to do. Teachers who use the cute curriculum often believe that children do not want to learn something unless it is "dressed up" as a fun activity. Some teachers do not consider the fact that children's

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questions can help guide the study of the topic; instead, they create cute activities to entice children's interest.

What Is an Example of the Cute Curriculum?

Finding out more about the community is a worthy topic of investigation in most preschool and kindergarten classrooms. Young children are interested in their families, the school, and their community, and are curious to know more about their immediate surroundings. Still, a unit on the community can easily become cute.

When children are asked to participate in predetermined packaged activities on community helpers, without consideration for their questions and interests, the result is the cute curriculum. Bulletin boards and pictures depicting figures of stereotypical careers (such as male doctors and female nurses), inflatable community helpers, and color books and worksheets of helpers, for example, all represent the cute curriculum. A cute activity might be one in which children manipulate cut-out figures or stickers meant to represent people's jobs. Unfortunately, they often resort to stereotypes, and often have no connection to the children's natural questions about their own communities. Another example would be making hats or badges of community helpers. While these activities are cute, real-world community helpers rarely parade around in paper hats and law enforcement personnel may or may not wear uniforms or badges. Many teachers do not see a problem with this practice, and so much of the time that could be spent more wisely on authentic experiences is wasted participating in these noneducative practices.

How Can We Transform the Cute Curriculum Into Authentic Learning?

The most important and crucial feature of authentic learning is that it always deals with the real world of children. Thus, an inquiry framework is necessary to move beyond the cute curriculum to more authentic learning. This section describes how Lynn, one of the authors of this article, used five questions to prepare more authentic learning activities for her kindergarten class, and to reduce, or eliminate, time spent on cute projects:

1. Do children's questions guide the development of the project?

Lynn's unit on the community was first and foremost guided by her children's questions. At the beginning of the year the students began asking the following questions about the school, which led to an authentic study of the school and the neighboring community.

Why aren't all of our friends at this school?
Has the school always been here?
Who are the helpers for our school?
Who is the boss here?
Who lives in the houses around the school?

2. Can I teach problem solving and collaboration in pursuit of this project?

The process of learning is just as important as the content. What strategies can children develop while investigating this topic? Lynn found that three salient features could be addressed while studying the community: developing a sense of classroom community and cooperation, practicing interviewing skills, and learning to compile data.

A sense of community and cooperation are developed

Young children are interested in their families, the school, and their community, and are curious to know more about their immediate surroundings.

through ownership. At the beginning of the year, Lynn decided that children would become more motivated if their ideas were a major part of the curriculum. By seriously considering the children's questions, an atmosphere of cooperation and community among the students thrived.

When children asked questions about who were the helpers at the school and who was the boss, Lynn realized that children could answer some of their questions through interviews with the principal, the secretary, the lunchroom workers, other teachers, and custodians.

The children worked together to compile the data, determining if, in fact, they had found answers to their questions. They also had to consider how to organize and share the data with others. Lynn carefully guided the children in developing a chart to represent their data visually. The chart listed the community workers' names, job titles, and how they did their work. The results were then shared with a 4th-grade class that was also studying the school and community.

3. *Does the study encourage independence as well as collaboration?* In the real world, we sometimes work alone, while at other times we work with others. A good study unit will provide opportunities for children to work both independently and in concert with others. The interviews fostered children's independence, while the activities of compiling information developed cooperation.

4. *Are children interacting with real objects and people?* Children learned about their immediate surroundings by answering the question, "Has the school always been here?," and by studying old photographs of the neighborhood and the school building. Daily walks in the neighborhood also provided many chances for the students to interact with real objects and people in the area. Guest speakers, including the school's first principal and the mayor, were invited to class.

5. *Do experiences facilitate the construction of new relationships?* Does the study revisit (in more depth) previous topics? Is there some thought for continuity within and across the curriculum? Throughout the curriculum, do activities and strategies build on children's prior knowledge? To help build a classroom community, Lynn asked the children to share photographs or drawings of their families with the class. As the children discussed them, several wanted to know, "Why aren't all of our friends at this school?" This expanded the study of children's families to include the school and community. In attempting to answer this question, Lynn was able to move children from familiar to unfamiliar information, thus facilitating the construction of new relationships.

Conclusions

Young children naturally have inquiring minds. If we take their questions seriously, we can develop authentic experiences and avoid the cute curriculum. There is no need to sugarcoat a study unit if we allow children to actively seek answers to their own questions. Learn to reexamine what we do with children. When we hear ourselves saying, "Isn't that cute?," try to remember that "cute" is a four-letter word and that children deserve much more.

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continued from page 1

preschool and kindergarten classrooms. The role of fine arts in early childhood programs is another area of high interest. What are your experiences in these areas? We know you have exciting and creative programs that readers could adapt to their own settings!

This is your *Focus on Pre-K & K*. We invite your suggestions about these or any other topics, and we especially welcome your manuscripts. If you have an idea for an article or comments about this issue, we encourage you to respond to our E-mail addresses:

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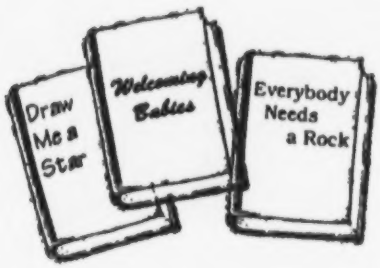
Picture Books
Tools for Shaping School To Fit the Child

Martha M. West, Shorter College



Meeting individual learners' needs poses a challenge for most teachers of children in the primary grades, especially minority children, who often have been excluded in traditional classrooms (Carter, 1970; Feagans, 1982; Ogbu, 1982). Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences (Gardner, 1993; Shore, 1995), combined with Jalongo's (1993) invitations to literacy, offers a model for using picture books to promote learning across the curriculum, thus addressing individual needs. This combination of theories creates the possibility for nurturing in each child the lifelong disposition to learn through reading. Moreover, this union of theories finds support in Mengert's (1997) brain research.

While matching picture books to a variety of intelligences (Gardner, 1993; Shore, 1995) can meet individual learners' needs, suitable matches between books and children are more likely if teachers first understand multiple intelligences in terms of learning characteristics. The intelligences and their characteristics, or learning avenues, can be described as bodily-kinesthetic (learning through moving, touching, and feeling); intrapersonal (learning through introspection and independent work); logical-mathematical (learning through number games, problem solving, patterning, experimenting, and logical puzzles); linguistic (learning through storytelling, word play, and creative writing); spatial (learning through images and visual cues); naturalistic (learning from and through nature); interpersonal (learning through group work); and musical (learning through music and rhythm).

These learning avenues suggest possible reading interests and related activities for each intelligence. A child with bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, for example, learns by moving, touching, and feeling. Such a child may enjoy reading the book *Everybody Needs a Rock* (Baylor, 1974), making rock prints, classifying rocks, researching the work of geologists, and writing rules for choosing the perfect rock. Similarly, intrapersonal learners may enjoy reading *William's Doll* (Zolotow, 1972), the story of a child who keeps true to his feelings in spite of others' opinions. Book-related activities for the intrapersonal learner could include writing about one's favorite things, or making a doll or puppet that resembles one's self.

Logical-mathematical learners may like the counting book *Ten Little Rabbits* (Grossman & Long, 1991). Young authors might even write and dramatize their own counting books with classmates. The tribal patterns of the ten rabbits' colorful blankets may inspire children to interview their families about customs, undertake weaving projects depicting family or classroom values, or research Native American tribal history.

Linguistic learners may find the book *All the Colors We Are* (Kissinger, 1994) interesting. The text, written both in Spanish and English, explains why skin tones vary. This explanation and a wide array of photographs suggest activities such as mixing and describing paint hues, creating new names for skin tones, comparing and contrasting skin tones, and graphing the spectrum of skin tones within a classroom.

The book *Draw Me a Star* (Carle, 1992) seems well-suited for spatial learners. This autobiographical tale describes the author-artist's childhood experience of drawing stars with his grandmother. Readers may want to develop other "Draw Me a . . ." books; create a variety of nighttime scenes; explore stars, planets, and rainbows;

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and interview family members about games they played as children.

Follow the Moon (Weeks, 1995), another night-related book, may appeal to naturalistic learners. This text, with breathtaking art, describes a child's efforts to send forth baby sea turtles to follow the moon. The story may prompt children to write letters to editors regarding environmental concerns, create sand sculptures, make texture rubbings of nature items, lead an environmental cleaning campaign, and conduct research about all kinds of families found in nature.

Multicultural family customs greet the interpersonal learner reading the book *Welcoming Babies* (Knight, 1994). Activities based on this book include showing and describing baby books, making collages of baby pictures, pricing baby products, and discovering babies' needs.

Opportunities for reading, writing, and singing lullabies may encourage musical learners to read *Welcoming Babies*, as well. *Today Is Monday* (Carle, 1993) seems written especially for children with musical intelligence. The simple melody printed on the book's last page makes singing about the foods we eat even more fun. Related activities may include keeping a food diary, drawing or painting foods eaten regularly, composing songs about favorite foods, classifying foods, and graphing the class's food preferences.

These activities represent only a fraction of those that are possible. Students' individual interests, and teachers' creativity, will likely suggest many more. Jalongo (1993) reminds us, however, that successfully engaging children with books and book-related activities depends largely upon invitations to literacy. That is, effective teachers make book events welcoming, participatory, social, celebratory, stimulating, and guest-centered. A welcoming invitation says, "You have been selected for this event." A participatory invitation communicates, "Join in. You're included." A social invitation suggests, "Let's share in this experience." A celebratory invitation announces, "Reading together is special and important." A stimulating invitation tells children, "This is exciting!" A guest-centered invitation makes each child feel wonderful.

Children usually respond positively when invited to enjoy purposefully chosen picture books and relevant activities. One element of learning is still missing, however: the brain's requirements. Learning occurs only when the brain's quest for meaning is satisfied, the brain's basic needs are met, the brain's requirement for success is addressed, and the brain's way of learning finds fulfillment (Mengert, 1997). Thus, picture books lead to learning only when they satisfy three basic questions: Who am I? What is my purpose? What is my relationship to other people? The brain can entertain those questions successfully only when its basic needs for hydration, nutrition, and nurturance are met. Enhanced brain performance becomes even more likely when the brain is given a chance to succeed, rather than fail. And finally, the brain learns best when presented with the opportunity to make applications.

Opportunities for application occur naturally in the context of social interaction. Children can successfully apply both reading and social skills when paired with friends for oral reading, book discussions, and book-related activities that address the brain's quest for meaning. Publishers offer many books suitable for this purpose. For example, the book *Hey, Al* (Yorinks, 1986) suggests conversation about the self in the context of work and play, as well as differences and similarities to animals. The book *Officer Buckle and Gloria* (Rathmann, 1995) encourages the reader to discover that teamwork makes life meaningful. Reading it immediately before or after a team project maximizes its message. *A Friend Like Ed* (Wagner, 1998) leads the child to ponder thoughts such as "I can be a friend," "I feel lonely when isolated," "My feelings sometimes are not admirable," "Friends make each other happy," "I need people," "I don't know everything," and "I can learn from other people." This book also suggests that all people are not alike, and individual differences lead to interesting friends. Children who read this book may want to make friendship bracelets, write letters to friends, or make pictures of their friends.

The brain's quest for meaning is further met through such books as *Lottie's New Beach Towel* (Mathers, 1998) and *Old Turtle* (Wood, 1992). Reading *Lottie's New Beach Towel* leads a reader to

conclude "I am a person with imagination, and I can use imagination to solve problems and help people." After reading this book, readers may want to brainstorm ways they can help at home and at school. *Old Turtle* subtly suggests that, "I am interrelated with other living things; I live in a beautiful world; people have many different colors, shapes, faces, and ways of speaking; people can be strong, yet tender; and people can think, argue, and hurt other people, as well as the earth." Just think of the authentic conversations, journal entries, and ecology projects *Old Turtle* suggests!

Two other helpful books for meeting the brain's needs are *The Paperboy* (Pilkey, 1996) and *Mama, Do You Love Me?* (Joosse, 1991). Reading *The Paperboy* prompts thoughts about purposeful, harmonious ways of living in relationships with people and animals. It also quietly depicts the rewards of engaging in meaningful work in a socially responsible way, and of persevering to accomplish difficult tasks. Readers may want to audiotape and replay oral descriptions of challenges they have faced. Or, they could role-play family situations that require cooperation among family members. *Mama, Do You Love Me?* presents the comforting message that unconditional love does not depend upon one's actions. It further communicates the bittersweet message that a child is not all-powerful. Related activities include writing or drawing loving messages for family members, composing songs about feelings, and authoring additional pages for *Mama, Do You Love Me?*

Picture books, when thoughtfully chosen and paired with meaningful activities, can address the brain's needs, thus shaping school to fit the individual child. Thoughtful consideration implies understanding and applying Gardner's multiple intelligences theory (Gardner, 1993; Shore, 1995), Jalongo's (1993) invitations to literacy, and Mengert's (1997) brain research.

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ACEI News

news of a global effort to establish international guidelines for early childhood education and care

On July 4-8, 1999, 75 delegates from 17 countries met at the Gottlieb Duttweiler Institute in Ruschlikon, Switzerland, to attend the International Symposium on Early Childhood Education and Care for the 21st Century. The symposium, sponsored by ACEI and OMEP (World Organization for Early Childhood Education), was developed over a period of three years, with meetings conducted at ACEI conferences in Minneapolis, Portland, and Tampa, and at OMEP conferences in Mexico City and Copenhagen. Leah Adams and Ulla Grob-Menges co-chaired the symposium for OMEP, and I chaired for ACEI. ACEI was represented by 31 delegates and recorders. Delegates also represented OMEP and other early childhood organizations with international interests.

The Gottlieb Duttweiler Institute, near Zurich, provided a beautiful setting and institute staff went out of their way to make the symposium a success. Delegates arrived each morning by bus and enjoyed luncheons in the Institute dining room.

Symposium delegates were inspired by presentations the first afternoon by Dr. Blanca Hermosilla of Chile, Dr. Peter Moss of England, and Dr. Bettye Caldwell. On the second and third days, delegates met in seven working groups to develop international guidelines. Each group had eight or nine delegates representing different countries and continents. The working groups developed guidelines for the following topics:

- Overall philosophy, goals, and policies
- Environment and physical space
- Curriculum content and pedagogy
- Teachers and staff
- Young children with special needs
- Accountability, supervision, and management
- Parent involvement

Although many delegates met for the first time on the opening day of the symposium, individuals in working groups quickly established strong relationships. Each working group had a leader and recorder to document their work as it progressed. Dialogue on the needs and intent of the topic engaged each group as they deliberated on how they would proceed and as they discussed the possible content of their guidelines. Rough drafts were produced by the end of the second day for input from the members of the other working groups. Drafts were posted in the main auditorium for individual delegates' perusal, who were invited to provide written comments.

On the third morning, Wednesday, it was back to work to revise and complete the guidelines in the working groups, using the input from other delegates. By the middle of the afternoon, final drafts for each topic were copied for delegates to review.

After all of their hard work, delegates and recorders were ready for a dinner cruise on Lake Zurich Wednesday evening. As the boat made a leisurely trip around the lake, participants had the opportunity to table-hop and wander about on the deck to chat with old and new friends.

During the final general session, working groups met to develop brief reports on issues not yet resolved and to make suggestions for the final document. Group leaders reported at the general session. ACEI President Shirley Raines and OMEP President Audrey Curtis also addressed the group.

The symposium ended, but the work continues. Editing the guidelines, which will be published cooperatively by OMEP and ACEI, is in progress, and plans for publication are being discussed. Hopefully, the guidelines' publication in English will soon be followed by publication in other languages. Presentations about the symposium and guidelines will be made at the organizations' conferences. The major challenge for the organizations represented will be to disseminate and advocate for the document's global adoption. Participants left the symposium with the feeling that significant work had been accomplished, but major efforts will have to continue if the global guidelines are to have a significant influence on the education and care of young children.

—Sue Wortham, ACEI Chair, International Symposium on Early Childhood Education and Care for the 21st Century

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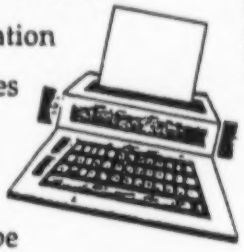
Call for Manuscripts

The readership of *Focus on Pre-K & K* is encouraged to submit ideas and manuscripts related to the education and development of children ages 4 to 6. Editorial assistance is available if needed. If you have any materials or suggestions to be considered for publication, please send them to:



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Focus on Pre-K & K
Fall 1999, Vol. 12, #1

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Winter 1999 • Vol. 12, No. 2

Focus On Pre-K & K

ages 4-6

A Quarterly Newsletter for the Education Community

From the Editors

We appreciate the positive responses we have received about our Fall issue of *Focus on Pre-K & K*. We welcome your suggestions and manuscripts. Please respond to our E-mail addresses listed on page 8.

This issue continues our look at the school year with a focus on using computers in kindergarten. The authors are experienced kindergarten teachers whose articles draw on their own observations of young children exploring computer technologies. In the first article, Pam Oken-Wright, inspired by the early childhood programs of Reggio Emilia, Italy, suggests that computer applications are best viewed as media, or "languages." Children use the computer as they use paint, clay, blocks, and written or spoken words—to make their ideas visible to themselves as well as to others. The author of the second article, Idarose Luntz, is a former kindergarten teacher who currently teaches in a computer lab for children from kindergarten through 5th grade. She focuses on computers as tools for enhancing academic skills, and offers many suggestions for gaining access to information (on the Internet or CD-ROM).

You know that machines and programs will never take the place of the skilled and knowledgeable

continued on page 3 . . .

The Technological Languages of Young Children

Pam Oken-Wright

Janie's mother recently had a baby. Computer graphics (via the application KidPix) do not come easily to her yet, but on this November morning, Janie sits with computer mouse in hand and draws a large figure with head, arms, legs, and a square purple torso. Residing in the torso is a smaller version of the same figure. Janie asks a teacher for help to type her message: "dear mom baby love." She chooses to draw the word "Janie," rather than typing it on the keyboard or clicking on the letters made available to her on the screen. Janie has used the computer as a language.

Although children certainly learn from some of the better educational software available, I believe that the depth of their experience with both technology and topic increases manifold, and that the possibilities multiply, when they use computers and other technology as languages.

When we think of "language," it is often spoken language that comes to mind. We talk to communicate and to express, but also to figure things out, for who among us has not worked through a problem by talking about it? When we talk we represent the ideas that we want to communicate, express, or understand better.

One Hundred Languages

Educators in Reggio Emilia, Italy, suggest there are 100 languages with which children can represent their thinking (Edwards, Gandini, & Forman, 1998). Spoken language is one, as is painting, and so are clay, wire, movement, music, drawing, and construction. Every time a child represents an idea in a new language, her understanding of the idea deepens. The specific characteristics of a new medium may inspire her to consider new aspects of the idea. Janie's drawing of her baby sister in her mommy's tummy followed

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several class conversations that began with talk about the baby herself, and quickly flowed to discourse about what happens to the baby before it is born. Janie represented this most important idea many times in many languages: through drawing, painting, dramatic play, and conversation. That she chose the computer as one of those languages fed my wonder about the computer as a tool for more than games. Given the same kind of opportunity to "mess around" with the computer as with paint and clay, it seems that children approach it as a medium, and learn it as a language.

Media As Languages

A language is a medium, but a medium is not automatically a language. For example, although paint is a medium, until a child learns to use the paint in order to communicate, express, and figure things out, it is not a language for that child. For a child to use a medium as a language, she must learn the "affordances" of that medium, those characteristics of the medium that when transformed by the child, lend it its power for representation (Forman, 1994). For example, we tend to think about a cat in a different way if we represent a cat in clay after representing it in pen.

Before a child can use a medium as a language, he must learn the medium; he must learn its affordances: "What will this medium do?" "What will it let me do?" To learn a medium, a child must use it often. It must be readily available, and the child must do the choosing about what to do with it.

Learning the Medium: KidPix

KidPix is a graphics program that allows children to draw, fill, manipulate, type text (with limited word processing), use special fill and movement techniques, invent and edit stamps, record short sound sequences, assemble drawings in slide show format, and more. It also has some capabilities that are less conducive to representation, such as coloring existing drawings. I have studied children's approach to KidPix and their growth toward using computers in order to represent ideas. Children's first explorations with KidPix most often look like scribble. They learn to control the mouse, how to change color and line thickness, and what all the buttons do. They learn what KidPix will do—and what it will let them do. This exploration is necessary before children can represent their ideas with KidPix.

It is my observation that children sometimes use KidPix in order to support their transition to using drawing as a language. Just as they are about to master drawing with pen or marker as a language, many children have a "signature" drawing, which they draw over and again; all of one child's drawings will contain the same elements during this stage. At some point the child breaks free of the signature and adds a new element that represents "something happening" in the drawing. Thereafter, she is able to use drawing as a language. For 5-year-old Elizabeth, the repeated elements were tree, nest, sun, sky, and grass. Just after she began to add unexpected elements to her pictures, Elizabeth began to draw similar pictures with KidPix. In one of her first representational computer drawings, she drew the tree, nest, and speckled eggs, as well as a human figure with both hands on the tree. Unlike the other elements of the drawing, the figure is not grounded; her legs (there are no feet) hover above the ground. Elizabeth dictated, "Rebecca is climbing up a tree to see flamingo eggs." Elizabeth was using KidPix as a language.

At another point that same year, several of the children (all of whom were 5 years old) had been exploring the idea of the human figure in profile. After I noticed the children representing people as if viewing them from the side, we engaged in some conversations in which children worked to figure out how profile actually works, and the children took their exploration into other media. One day Kristen, while working in KidPix, drew a face in profile and a hand holding a mirror, into which the face was looking. The reflected face was also in profile. Kristen's study of profile took her to the computer. Her actions led me to wonder: What was it about the affordances of KidPix or the computer itself that appealed to Kristen as she prepared to take her study of profile further?

Children also use KidPix as a first medium in exploring ideas. One day Claire presented a drawing of a lion she had done with KidPix. As we talked about her lion, Claire declared that she intended to make this same lion out of clay. She used her drawing as a referent while she worked

on a foot-long clay lion.

When children plumb the depths of KidPix, they discover many possibilities. One group discovered that if you click the dynamite icon to "explode" a picture, then click again before it finishes, you end up with concentric circles covering the screen. As we had investigated circles earlier in the year, the children saw great potential in these circles, and they began to manipulate the circles, using fill tools, paint tools, and moving tools. Months after the investigation of circles had ended, the children had discovered a new language with which to revisit the topic.

In my search for ways in which KidPix and the computer could become languages for children, I have had many surprises. The children are accustomed to using pictures as referents when they want to represent a thing but do not have a clear enough mental image of it to proceed unaided. When one child placed the KidPix stamp of a school bus on the screen and then proceeded to draw the school bus she had in mind under it, using the stamp as a referent, several other children recognized the strategy as a useful one. From then on, children used the stamps as referents when they needed to. It had never occurred to me to offer the stamps as models. In fact, I disliked the stamps, because children's work with drawing and painting tools was often richer without the stamps. In discovering this use for the stamps, the children made me wonder if other pictures might be imported for similar purposes. KidPix did not offer this capability, so we moved on to Painter Classic, a more sophisticated application. When some children wanted to make a life-size clay statue of our class kitten, we imported a photograph of the kitten into Painter Classic. The children used the software's tracing capabilities to study the position and angles of the cat's body before they began the contour drawing that prepared them for working with clay. Showing a marvelous sense of humor, the children came back later to "change" the photograph of the cat by tracing the outline of the photograph and filling it in with unusual patterns. We had a quilted cat, a cat made of bricks, and a cat that could have been lifted straight from Van Gogh's *Starry Night*.

Beyond Drawing

In the winter of 1998, I visited La Villetta School in Reggio Emilia, Italy. The preprimary schools of Reggio Emilia were in their second year of exploring the idea of the "city." The children of La Villetta had been representing aspects of "city" for many months and in many languages. On this day a group of children were working in the *atelier* (studio), trying to represent some aspect of "city," using a scanner, recycled and new materials, two-dimensional images, and a computer. The children arranged objects on the scanner bed, covered the arrangement with a large piece of white paper, closed the lid, and scanned the image into the computer. They then evaluated the resulting image collaboratively, returned to the scanner to revise their construction, and re-scanned and re-evaluated until they were satisfied. When they were ready, the *atelierista* (studio teacher) helped the children print the image. Using the languages of technology, these children had shifted back and forth from three dimensions to two in order to represent their idea.

To make this kind of creative use of technology possible, I believe we have to push our imaginations beyond the intended purpose of the hardware/software. The fact that computers have not become language(s) in the classroom more than they have may be because children do not have frequent enough access to

continued on page 6 . . .

. . . *continued from page 1*

teacher! Some educators even argue that computers have the potential to cause harm by displacing more traditional materials and multi-sensory experiences. (See "The 'Meme' That Ate Childhood" by Jane Healy in the October 7, 1998 issue of *Education Week* on the Web (http://www.edweek.com).) The problems Healy describes, however, might lie not so much with children's access to computers, but with the outmoded and unimaginative use of these tools. The authors of these articles challenge all of us to move beyond antiquated notions of programmed learning. We hope you will be inspired to try some of their ideas.

—R.N. and P.H.

Using Computers in the Kindergarten

Idarose Luntz, Computer Teacher, University School
Shaker Heights, Ohio

I am a teacher at a private boys' school that was established 102 years ago. I started the all-day kindergarten and co-taught in the kindergarten for 14 years. Four years ago, I started the Lower School computer lab in order to teach basic computer skills to children in kindergarten through 5th grade and to integrate computer skills into the curriculum. I work with a technical partner who is always available to fix and tweak the machines. He helped me improve my skills and become confident on the computer so that I can use the machine as an instrument for learning.

There are 20 IBM-compatible machines in the Lower School computer lab. Every boy gets to use the computer he feels most comfortable with throughout the whole year. All of the boys and their parents sign a contract for safe use of the Internet at the beginning of the year. My lab is arranged so I can visually supervise every computer. We also use a "net nanny" to block troublesome sites on the Internet. The net nanny we use is Cybersitter'98, from SOLID OAK Software. It works with Windows 95 and Windows 98.

Computers, when used appropriately, help enhance those skills that children need for success at school: learning to listen, following directions, hand-eye coordination, copying, spatial awareness, and understanding technical vocabulary. These skills are all encouraged when the computer is used correctly. Divergent thinking is appreciated. Cooperation and sharing are encouraged as students discover that learning is fun.

In the kindergarten classroom at University School, one computer is set up as a center for learning more about the current thematic unit. A computer program on a CD-ROM is used in the classroom first thing every morning as an open choice. Some of the themes this year are Castles, Animals That Live in Ponds, the Sea, Flight and Airplanes, and the Planets. Some of the CD programs used in the classroom are "Bailey's Book House" by Edmark, "The Playroom" by Broderbund, and "Madeline Thinking Games" by Creative Wonders.

"Bailey's Book House" opens in Bailey's living room, offering several activity choices. Each activity has two modes. One activity has rhyming words, while another activity has color and shape words to read and change with a click of the mouse. In a third activity, children write and then read a story by choosing a sequence of three pictures depicting subject, action, and outcome. The sentences are read back to the writer in a pleasant, friendly voice. Because the words are spoken and the child can follow along, the kindergarten boys can use this program. The graphics are pleasing and the many activities draw the children back to the program again and again.

"James Discovers Math," by Broderbund, is another CD-ROM program with wonderful math games that kindergarten children always love to play. Children can work with the program individually or in pairs. The discussions that come from the choice of which number to choose are exciting to hear, as well as being informative for teachers. The children count as they match the numbers, and they can add and subtract. I instruct the boys in the lab on how to use the program they have in their classroom.

The computer lab programs also can extend themes used in the classroom. Here, I use the computer as a holistic tool for learning. First, I talk to the teachers to find out the theme the boys are studying. Next, I find an appropriate CD program and scout the Internet for appropriate sites. I use

the bookmark or footnote button to enable me or my students to come back to a particular site whenever desired. This allows the boys to focus on their research instead of on the mechanics of the machine. I look for pages that are not too commercial, that can be easily read, and that are easy to manipulate. If a book is better, we use the book. Before the boys enter the lab, I put up the bookmarked page I think they should use. The children are taught to use the page to find information or to improve a skill. They learn to evaluate a Web page and to discriminate among Web pages. I often have the boys do five-minute activities for math or reading skills on the computer as the first lesson. I always have a backup lesson, or I use programs that are on CDs.

The boys' favorite CD program is "Reading Maze" by Great Wave Software. Students go through a series of rooms to match images of articles on a table with words on a list. In the beginning of the program the words can be heard and a magnifying glass shows which room the object is in. Later, the students can only read the word they match to the object. When the object is found, the children again go through a series of matching letters to objects, reading sentences, following directions, or matching objects to words. When they complete this activity, an alphabet book appears with the found objects. A friendly elf often appears to take the boys to another room. The boys can find and use a flashlight and a magnifying glass to take them through a secret passage, which helps them move through the rooms faster. The boys love to print out the sequenced certificates that appear at the end of a series of activities. The program can be customized to each boy's skill level. The children are eager to complete the mazes, and they often ask to do this program.

Another example of a holistic experience, done in the fall, is the study of bats. The science teacher has the boys research bats, and the librarian reads stories about bats. One favorite is *Stella Luna*, by Janell Cannon (1993). In the computer lab, the boys work in pairs to read along with the companion CD-ROM. One boy controls the mouse while the other directs where his partner should point and click the mouse. When they have discovered and clicked on all the animations they may turn to the next page. The boys switch jobs with the new page. They also switch chairs to remind themselves who is the "mouse man" and who is the "director." Listening to the discussion and the "oohs" and "ahs" as you pass by the computer lab door lets you know that a lot of learning is taking place. Readers and pre-readers can work together on this activity.

I think computers, used appropriately, can improve the way a young student learns to read, write, appreciate books, do research, socialize, communicate, and share information. There are many avenues for a young learner to gain data. The Internet is one way to receive understanding about the world. CD-ROM programs are another. Children and parents can learn together. Computers help the teacher in the classroom to include and extend learning about the world in an exciting and graphic way. School has never been the only place to learn. Learning always has been a continuous process. Now with the computer, learning can take place in a continuous circle—at school, at home, and back again. Computers help bring the world into the classroom and extend the world of each student.

The following is a list of Internet sites that I have used with children:

http://www.kidsdomain.com
If you want fun games and an extension to your classroom projects during holiday time, try this site. There are games, crafts, gift-making ideas, books to read, and links to follow.

http://www.acs.ucalgary.ca/~dkbrown/stories.html
Links to online stories, folktales, myths, legends, songs, and poetry. Includes a great index.

http://www.janbrett.com/index.html
Hear an author talk about her books while you see and listen to her stories.

http://www.ufsia.ac.be/Arachnology/Pages/Kids.html
The students can learn about every spider site imaginable.

... *continued from page 3*

software compatible with representation. Or it may be that children do not have the freedom to explore available technological media. The software we offer children is vital to their understanding that the computer has representational potential. Unfortunately, our choice of programs suited to this kind of learning is still limited. However, if we embrace an image of the computer as a medium, and consider that children will make their ideas visible with this medium, we can look beyond so-called "children's" software packages and toward the software that artists use, thereby broadening the possibilities.

More sophisticated graphics applications offer more opportunities. Word processing software and E-mail also can be media for representation. There are animation programs and music writing programs out there that might be adaptable for use in the early childhood classroom. I think there is great potential to take mapping to the computer, although I have not encountered software that allows children to use mapping as a language. Even though I have not had the resources to explore the possibilities since its early years, LOGO, considered a language by its inventor (Papert, 1980), allows children to write programs to make things happen.

Setting the Conditions for the Use of Computer As a Language

Teachers can support the child's exploration, offer suggestions when she is stuck, and offer help when she has explored the medium enough to want to represent with it. Too little exposure, and a medium will not become a language. Too much adult agenda, and it will not become a language. Too little support when it is needed, and the process is hindered. It is the same for computers and technology as it is for other media. We can set conditions conducive to children's use of computer and peripherals as languages if we:

- Make the computer as readily available for the real work of representation as we do with markers, paints, and all other media. The computer should not be a "reward" for finishing work, it is its own work.
- Choose software carefully, with the understanding that the computer can become a language through which children can represent and, through representation, learn.
- Encourage children to collaborate at the computer. Capitalize on the power of contagion and shared learning that collaboration affords.
- Offer an incentive to move beyond exploration.
- Invite children to make their representation public. Contagion is a powerful teacher.
- Encourage children to use, and learn from, each other's experiences.

We have barely begun to tap the potential of technology in the early childhood classroom. Computer games and most "educational software" are self-limiting. We want to find software that opens, rather than defines, the possibilities. Computers can serve to isolate children, or to bring them together. We want to set up our environment around technology that will encourage collaboration and community. Computers can feel like separate worlds within a classroom. We want to draw them in, to integrate them as yet another in the 100 languages with which children can make their ideas visible.

I have just begun to explore ways in which we can help make this happen. I invite my colleagues to join me. Once we share an understanding of technologies as languages with which children can make their ideas visible, we, as teacher-researchers, can begin to network with each other and to broadcast our findings: software not necessarily designed for children, but for artists in the real world, software that holds possibilities for meaningful representation; real materials for real work.

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international cooperation

In the Finnish education community, the international issues are gaining more interest every day. As a member of the European Union, Finland has close connections with other European countries. We are also a part of the global education society, and we are concerned with what is happening to the world's children. We are ready to work for children and to make a better world. Our goal also is to improve our own work with Finnish children.

There are two main issues that are currently of interest to Finnish teachers. First, there is the question of resources and the cancellation of our government-guided, highly regulated, and centralized education system. The second issue is the development of a quality assessment system. A new political trend of privatization is behind the reduction of government-supported schools. This trend has been influenced by free enterprise systems (e.g., from the U.S.). In practice, this has meant fewer resources for schools. Teachers are afraid of the effects of this privatization. Will the trend lead to unequal opportunities for schools, teaching, and children in general, or will it bring new opportunities to improve quality in the schools? In order to evaluate the development of the education system, a quality assessment system has been created. Yet, teachers are worried about whether the quality assessment system will lead to ranking the schools, or whether it will give teachers tools for self-assessment, reflection, and improvement.

Due to this strong developmental process in the education system, teachers have many questions, and they are motivated to find answers. Therefore, teachers would like to cooperate beyond the national level; they feel the need for international reflection. Teachers want to hear how educators from other countries cope when resources are cut and how they implement and experience quality assessment. Will quality assessment be a threat or a strength?

In Finland, as well as in other counties, there are many national organizations that allow colleagues to meet and discuss education issues. ACEI differs from these organizations because of its international emphasis. This aspect should be strengthened, and thus the different responsibilities between national and international organizations could be clarified.

Today seems to be a time of gradual change. Young teachers view the world as full of opportunities. They have a strong orientation toward international issues and cross-cultural cooperation and they are more skillful in international interaction. They speak many languages, and many of them have been studying abroad. Thus, they see international cooperation as an opportunity to give something to other cultures while gaining a better understanding of their own culture.

As a Vice President of ACEI, I see the Association most of all as an international organization. It gives our members an excellent opportunity to build networks among teachers on an international level. But what are the concrete expectations for international cooperation, and what are the members' opinions about how this international organization differs from other organizations? We have clear goals for ACEI, but can we implement the goals together on an international level? I welcome your thoughts.

—Eeva Hujala,
Vice President Representing
Infancy/Early Childhood

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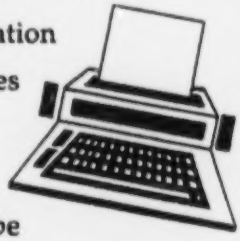
Call for Manuscripts

The readership of *Focus on Pre-K & K* is encouraged to submit ideas and manuscripts related to the education and development of children ages 4 to 6. Editorial assistance is available if needed. If you have any materials or suggestions to be considered for publication, please send them to:



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Focus on Pre-K & K
Winter 1999, Vol. 12, No. 2

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ACEI

Spring 2000 • Vol. 12, No. 3

Focus On Pre-K & K

ages 4-6

A Quarterly Newsletter for the Education Community

From the Editors

The editors are proud to bring you two articles that describe exciting experiences you may want to share with the young students in your schools. The authors take readers from a research base to practical suggestions for classroom use.

Gail Ritchie describes how she faced the challenge of meeting rigorous state standards in her K-1 multiage classroom, while demonstrating that children could learn through play. She presents examples that show how early childhood professionals can fulfill the requirements of their position and also meet the needs of children with appropriate practices.

Dottie Bauer, as a university supervisor and methods instructor in a college, observed Pre-K and K students being introduced to Picasso. The preservice teachers of 4- and 5-year-olds demonstrated how young children can respond to and learn from art and art history, develop an aesthetic sense, and create artistic products. Bauer's observations should encourage and inspire early childhood teachers to extend basic art practices in the classroom and reach for higher levels.

The experiences and comments of *Focus on Pre-K & K* readers are important to us. We welcome your manuscripts and encourage you to share ideas with other colleagues. Let us hear from you soon!

—R.N. and P.H.

Meeting State and County Standards and Objectives Within a Play-Based Classroom

Gail V. Ritchie, Fairfax County (Virginia) Public Schools

I began the 1999-2000 school year with anticipation, excitement, and more than a little anxiety. For the first time ever, I would be teaching a K-1 multiage class. While I felt confident that I could successfully synthesize the kindergarten and 1st-grade curricula, I was concerned I would be so worried about meeting benchmarks that I would not allow the children sufficient time to play. Many educators believe that once children leave kindergarten, they must stop playing and focus on working to learn. I believe that play is the primary vehicle by which young children construct knowledge and understanding. In other words, they learn *by* playing. Teaching K-1 was the perfect opportunity to prove to myself and my colleagues that I "believe in what I do" and "do what I believe" (Wassermann, 1990).

What and Why

I decided to use action research to document that my students could meet Virginia's tough new standards of learning in a play-based environment. I formulated the research question, "How can I meet Program of Studies (POS) and Standards of Learning (SOL) objectives and still keep play alive in my K-1 classroom?" I structured my classroom to provide the essential conditions for play: a supportive climate; sufficient space, time, and materials for play; and common and familiar experiences as a background for play (Isenberg & Jalongo, 1997). I carefully organized the classroom environment into cozy, inviting interest centers (Garreau & Kennedy, 1991) that would reflect a multiple intelli-

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gences framework (Thomas, 1994). I stocked these centers with a variety of materials designed to promote creativity and critical thinking (Edwards et al., 1993). Following Wassermann's (1990) notion of "Big Ideas" and Bredekamp and Rosegrant's (1993) idea of conceptual planning, I sketched out a framework of teaching/learning for the year. This framework would allow a flow of interconnected experiences across curriculum areas, incorporate multiple intelligences, and feature "hands-on/minds-on" (Wassermann, 1990) exploration and investigation as a major means of concept acquisition. I left plenty of room to include children's ideas and interests as the year unfolded.

What Is Play?

Sandra Stone (1995) urged early childhood educators to be advocates for the social, emotional, cognitive, and physical benefits of play. Many people do not truly understand what play in a primary classroom looks like. At Back-to-School night, I talked with my students' parents at length about what the term "play" means to me. I explained that when children are looking at books, attempting to write, tracking print on a classroom chart, or listening to a tape as they follow along in a book, they are playing with words and the patterns of language. When young children investigate the natural world, make observations, record what they notice, and then report their findings, they are playing with science. When children engage in active, hands-on exploration of concrete materials to build conceptual understanding, they are playing with mathematics. They learn civics through participation in rule-setting, decision-making, and voting. They learn geography by examining maps, building three-dimensional models of maps, and creating their own maps. Children learn about, and truly begin to understand, history when they engage in role-playing. They learn about economics as they pretend to buy and sell goods in a classroom store.

Each day in my K-1 classroom begins with "Networking," based on Wassermann's concept of "Breathing Out" (1990). Children may choose to play anywhere in the classroom. They choose with whom and what to play. This time helps them make a positive transition from home to school. There is no risk involved, because the child chooses what to do; no one has placed any external expectations on the experience. Once all the children have had sufficient time to get their play set up, have entered and engaged in the play scenario, and are ready to bring it to closure, we clean up and have a community meeting.

During the rest of the school day, children can still make choices, but those choices are not as open-ended. For example, during the language arts blocks of time, the children choose from among a variety of language arts-related activities, such as buddy reading, writing a story, creating artwork, playing with letters and words, and role-playing in the drama center. Often, everyone "gets to do" a required experience with varying degrees of adult supervision before making their individual choices. For example, after we read about pumpkins, each child wrote his/her own story about how pumpkins grow. I strive to maintain a balance between activities selected by me and those chosen by the children. Also, I sometimes need to direct students to engage in experiences they might never have chosen for themselves.

Children know what choices are available because I have provided procedural posters to help them narrow their focus and lessen the confusion about "what's open" and "what's closed" during different segments of the day. Each poster is brightly colored, with pictures of the "open" centers and step-by-step procedures. In addition, each center features a "What Can I Do" information card with ideas for play in that center. The children and I filled these cards in during the first two weeks of school, as we played in the centers and saw what was available.

What I've Observed So Far

As the first semester of the school year drew to a close, I realized that I had been able to meet POS/SOL objectives while keeping play alive in the classroom. When I held conferences with parents at the end of the first quarter, we could see evidence of the children's academic progress in their work samples and in my anecdotal records. Furthermore, I noticed

that the play opportunities also contributed to the children's social/emotional development.

Social/emotional development

Much of the social/emotional growth I witnessed was a result of the interaction between 1st-graders and kindergartners as they played in the centers. The 1st-graders began the year by revisiting their favorite centers from kindergarten, thus offering the kindergartners some insight into the possibilities for play. It also showed them that they did not need to wait for adults to tell them what to do. By observing the "experienced" students, the kindergartners learned how to share, take turns, and solve their own problems without tattling.

Cognitive development

I began the school year focusing on play and community-building. Once a positive foundation for learning was established, I then planned and implemented an integrated curriculum. I provided open-ended, common background experiences for all the students. These whole-class experiences were followed by specific, interest/ability-related explorations for small groups. In math, I engaged the students in whole-group experiences related to sorting/classifying, patterning, geometry, number concepts, and data analysis. The students were especially interested in patterning; I observed that all but one child understood quickly what a pattern was and how to create one using math manipulatives such as unifix cubes, pattern blocks, shells, buttons, and beads. Based on this information, I then created some more challenging investigations for the class. One day, each child wrote his or her name over and over on an 8" x 11" hundreds chart, after which the class looked for the patterns created with letters and words. The next day, the whole group filled in a poster-sized hundreds chart with numerals. As I wrote in the numerals, students began to get very excited about the patterns they noticed. We counted by fives and tens, using the visual pattern of the chart to help us remember "what comes next." Then we built unifix trains in sets of fives and tens and counted those. The children were very interested in this lesson and many of them understood that numbers are a pattern, also. The concrete action of building the trains helped the less proficient students begin to understand numerical patterns.

My students so enjoyed playing with patterns that I extended the play to include symmetry. I introduced symmetry using familiar materials (e.g., the overhead projector and pattern blocks). The students then used paper facsimiles of the pattern blocks to create symmetrical designs on paper. They also created new symmetrical designs each day, on paper, as well as by using the overhead projector and light table. Revisiting and replaying is a necessary part of building understanding. Teachers can not just do something once with their students, check it off, and consider it "covered." We must ensure that students have multiple opportunities in various modes and with various materials to make sense of a concept. Play is the ideal vehicle for this learning process!

Language arts

Classroom play in language arts takes many forms, from "playing at" reading and writing, to approximations of reading and writing, to scaffolded reading and writing, to actual reading and writing. It also includes setting up and playing out imaginative scenarios in the drama center, where oral language can be developed and refined. One of my students' favorite language arts experiences is the "Secret Message." Each day, as part of our community meeting, we decode a secret message. This is an opportunity for children to develop a concept of letter versus word, and to begin understanding how certain combinations of letters are used to form words. All the students can engage in this activity, regardless of their level of understanding about letters and words. The children in my class now know that if the message ends with a question mark, the first word is often "What" or "Why." Typically, the children will guess some letters in a word and then figure out what the word is, based on those letters. All of these enjoyable aspects of decoding are congruent with POS language arts objectives: concepts of print and conventions of language!

Social studies

One of the history objectives for both kindergartners and 1st-graders is understanding the

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Picasso Comes to Pre-K/K

An Example of Art Education for Young Children

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As a supervisor and methods instructor for students in a preservice teacher education program for early childhood certification (birth to age 8), I spend a fair amount of time in classrooms observing both children and college students. One day, when I was in the campus Child Development Center's Pre-K/K classroom, I observed several children painting with different shades of blue paint. I watched intently for several minutes; when one girl looked up from her work, I asked her to tell me about her painting. She replied in a direct, matter-of-fact tone, "I'm being Picasso!"

The visual arts long have been an acknowledged foundation of the early childhood classroom. Most basic early childhood education curriculum guides list the basic supplies and materials needed for creative art activities; suggest lessons using paint, drawing implements, clay, and collage; offer strategies for storage, drying, and display of children's artwork; provide guidelines for talking with children about their artwork; and review the stages in children's artistic development. These guides usually focus on fostering creativity as a way to support development of young children's cognitive, fine-motor, and socioemotional skills. Teachers are admonished to avoid the use of coloring books or models, and not to overemphasize craft activities, all of which may thwart children's creativity (Dodge & Colker, 1996; Mitchell, 1992).

Art educators describe four components of the complete art program, which early childhood educators need to apply in developmentally appropriate ways. First, art education involves the development of an aesthetic sense—learning to see the world and appreciate its beauty. Second, art education involves having the opportunity to create artistic products using a variety of materials. Third, it includes learning about artists and art history. Fourth, an art education program teaches us to respond to artwork in an informed way, to learn the elements of design, and to evaluate these principles of art (Herberholz & Hanson, 1990; Schirrmacher, 1988; Spodek, 1993). In the above-mentioned Pre-K/K classroom, these components of art education were developed through a unit of study focusing on Pablo Picasso, which exposed children to his paintings and his life story, and which introduced several different techniques, media, principles, and elements of design. The unit was developed by Heather Pelkey, an early childhood education and art major at Keene State College, in collaboration with her cooperating teacher, Deirdre McPartlin, and by me, her academic adviser, course instructor, and field supervisor.

Children's literature focusing on Picasso's life was shared at circle time and made available on the book shelf (Lepscky, 1984; Raboff, 1968). The unit was structured around three major periods in Picasso's artistic life: the Blue Period, the Rose Period, and Cubism. We selected these periods as appropriate for the developmental level of the children in the classroom (H. Pelkey, personal communication). We displayed artwork from each period and discussed it with the children in relation to Picasso's overall life.

To introduce the Blue Period, the class discussed Picasso's feelings of sadness and loneliness at the death of his best friend. Children shared things that made them sad, chose colors that made them feel sad, and listed blue objects. As part of the Rose Period, the children learned that Picasso eventually fell in love and began to feel happier about life. They identified colors and experiences that made them feel happy, and brainstormed ways to make others feel happy. An exploration of Cubism included an examination of various prints to identify the contrast between realism and the abstract nature of Picasso's technique. Children learned that sometimes famous

artists paint realistic paintings, and sometimes they paint abstract works. While young children do not have a complete understanding of historical time, they are able to recognize style and techniques utilized by different artists (Wolf, 1990). Thus, they were able to identify the different styles developed by Picasso in relation to different events and stages in his life.

The unit fostered aesthetic development as the children viewed prints and created an art gallery of their own. Prints of Picasso's paintings from the Blue period (Child With a Dove, The Old Guitarist, Poor People on the Seashore), the Rose period (Family of Saltimbanques, Boy With a Pipe), and the Cubist period (Three Musicians, Head) were displayed around the room. Several of Picasso's self portraits also were displayed to "bring" the artist himself into the classroom. (See http://www.spectrumvoice.com/art/artists/major/p/picasso.htm for reproductions of the artwork.) Large-format art books focusing on Picasso provided a wider range of the artist's work. Heather, Deirdre, and I carefully selected developmentally appropriate prints for discussion and viewing. In turn, the children's artwork, based on one of Picasso's techniques, was mounted and displayed in an "art gallery" alongside a print of Picasso that used a similar technique. As the unit progressed, the displays featured paintings in blue and in rose, and various collages in the cubist style. Children invited their parents to view the gallery, which helped incorporate families into the unit.

The central focus of the unit was the production of new and interesting art, using varied techniques. Children created collages of blue images and red images; they experimented with making shades of blue and rose; they painted sad pictures and happy pictures of faces, hearts, and flowers; they printed with sponges cut into different shapes. They used watercolors, tempera paints, and glue. They learned how to create monoprints. They created abstract cubist-style pictures by using magazine cut-outs of elements of the human body and assembling them as a collage. They also used precut shapes of different sizes, colors, textures, and types of paper to create abstract collages. They created elaborate designs using shape templates.

The fourth element of an art education program, sometimes referred to as art criticism, focuses on responding to artwork in an informed way. As children viewed the Picasso prints and the works in their classroom art gallery, they became able to respond to questions about the contents of the paintings, the colors used, and the lines and shapes included, and to offer their general impressions of the artwork. (See Cole and Schaefer, 1990, for excellent questioning strategies.) They were able to describe the elements of Picasso's artwork to family members and other visitors to the classroom, and became able to connect their own work to Picasso's styles.

In addition to meeting art education goals, the unit incorporated Howard Gardner's (1983) multiple intelligences and involved children in a range of curriculum areas, including mathematics (shapes and patterns), science (investigating shades of paint), literacy (books and writing about their artwork), as well as art itself. While all the ideas listed were not implemented, due to the brief nature of Heather's field experience, the model of using an artist as the focus for art education and integrated curriculum in an early childhood classroom is strong, and can be replicated. For example, at the end of the Picasso unit, Deirdre planned and implemented a similar unit focusing on Georgia O'Keeffe. Using interesting artists as the focus can strengthen early childhood art education and move it beyond the basics. Certainly, the budding artists in your classroom will benefit from "being Picasso"!

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. . . continued from page 3

passage of time, a very abstract concept. To make it more easily understood, I engaged my students in a discussion about history, beginning with the "here and now." First I talked about how each person has a history (i.e., his or her life up to now represents history). Then I talked about our classroom history and showed how our class album/scrapbook is our class's history so far. The students began to understand that the "life stories" they had written during our study of self were their life histories. Together, we built a time line of historical events we had learned about up to that point. We placed them in order from oldest to newest. Later, each child built family time lines of their family members from oldest to youngest. We transferred our math understanding of sequencing to help us understand the passage of time. At one point, we went on a field trip to Mt. Vernon, so that the children could see a historical landmark. This visit inspired them to create a class book about our trip to share with the classroom families. Upon return to the classroom, Kristy informed us that we needed to put George Washington "on the time line." Since then, the children have really taken to the idea of a time line.

The time line seems to provide a visual organizer of history for the children. It allows them to mentally "play with" the abstract idea of history by seeing where people and events occurred in relation to one another. They discuss history in such a way that I believe they are truly beginning to understand about the passage of time. When we read about Pilgrim children, they said things such as, "They worked hard," "They wore lots of different clothes," "They didn't watch t.v." When I asked them "Why?" they replied, "It wasn't invented yet." Then other children pointed out that there was no electricity then, either.

What goes on their time line is not confined to history/social studies, as it would be on mine. When we read a story that began, "Long, long ago. . ." and talked about how receding glaciers had formed Plymouth Rock, the children wanted to add Plymouth Rock to the time line. When we investigated evergreens in science, we added those to the time line. This involved some research into when the trees first grew in North America, but we found the information.

Learning about historical people and events, engaging in research, and reporting that research are all curriculum objectives. More important, the students became interested in these areas of the curriculum because of their play with history and the passage of time. The time line has even "invaded" language arts. So, our time line now represents passage of time, interrelated curriculum, and a snapshot of what we have been studying/learning so far this year. In fact, it has become such an important piece of our classroom that I recently had to stretch it all the way across the room.

Another area of social studies understanding has blossomed as a result of a carefully planned and implemented play-based experience. To help students begin to understand economic concepts such as needs versus wants, scarcity, production and consumption, trade, cost, etc., I joined a group of teachers in organizing a multiage, multiple intelligences economics simulation. Each classroom housed a different store, representing different intelligence areas. Our classroom was the bookstore (verbal-linguistic intelligence), another classroom was a Nature Company-type store (naturalist), another was an aerobics studio (bodily-kinesthetic and musical intelligences), another was a paper ornament shop that people could enter only after donating something for charity (visual-spatial, interpersonal), and the last was a bakery (bodily-kinesthetic). We began planning in early December, and we opened the "shopping plaza" for one day of business the third week in December. The children paid for goods and services with plastic money.

During the month of December, we played money games, counted money, and "earned" plastic money. We read about the history of money, and of course, added money to our time line. We gathered items, such as used books. Each day, we created another product for our store, including bookmarks, blank journals, blank tab books, pop-up greeting cards, calendars, and "feather pencils." Then, as a class, we determined prices for each item. While I felt that some of the prices were too low and some were too high, I did not say anything. I wanted to see what would happen if certain things sold well and others did not.

When shopping began, our bookstore was mobbed. We sold out of calendars almost immediately, and the Nature Company-type store, "Wild Things," sold out of evergreen arrangements just as quickly. This experience immediately gave the children a tangible sense of scarcity. During our "after action" discussion, children told me that the calendars sold fast because "we fanned them out [made them look good] and [because] they were a good price [only 50 cents]." Alicia said that the store offered children "a good chance to get a nice calendar for a low price." She understood the idea of a bargain, a difficult economics term to teach without a "being there" experience. The children's comments during the post-shopping discussion reflected their understanding. T.C. thought that $1.00 was too high for greeting cards; in fact, we did not sell any. Colby reminded us that the pencils also were $1.00, and that they had sold. Kristy thought the pencils sold because "they were pretty." These children realized that price and appearance are important elements for moving merchandise.

After the whole-group discussion, I engaged small groups of students in an "after action" survey. The survey included a section listing economics terms such as: need, want, trade, barter, cost, money, opportunity cost, free, product, produce, employee, make, buy, sell, resources, work, goods, services, choices, income, consumer, and economic problem. Most of my students knew and could explain what all the terms meant, except for "opportunity cost" and "economic problem," which are terms from the 2nd-grade POS for economics. Nathan said, "Well, I know what a problem is," so he circled just that part of the phrase. Amy joyfully announced, in the middle of her group's discussion, "Hey, these are all money words!" This let me know that she did, indeed, understand what these words meant.

Implications and Next Steps

Children can and do achieve POS and SOL objectives through play-based experiences. Playing with patterning in math helped children notice and understand alphabetic and numerical patterns. Playing with history via a time line and role-playing helped children understand historical concepts such as the passage of time. Playing with economics helped children understand abstract notions such as scarcity, want, goods, and services. Living out real experiences helped children develop true conceptual understandings, in contrast to isolated drill/skill exercises. When children actually produce a product, price it, gauge the results, shop for themselves, experience supply/demand, and exchange money for goods and services, they are getting a true, relevant, meaningful lesson in economics. I do not think this level of learning/understanding could be met by sitting at desks memorizing facts. I think the learning that emerged from these experiences came about because of the "hands-on/minds-on" (Wassermann, 1990) nature of the events.

I will continue to observe my students as they play across the curriculum. The data I have collected thus far affirms my belief that play is critical to young children's cognitive development. During the next semester, my students will be playing with the ideas and beliefs of ecology (social studies and science), playing with measurement in mathematics, and revisiting history as we learn about more famous people in our nation's past. The classroom climate will continue to encourage and promote child-choice, and replay/revisit/extend experiences, while nurturing the further development of children's interpersonal skills.

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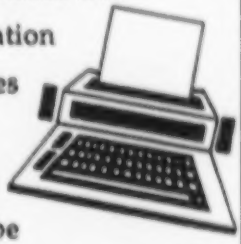

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Focus on Pre-K & K
Spring 2000, Vol. 12, No. 3

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Summer 2000 • Vol. 12, No. 4

Focus On Pre-K & K ages 4-6

A Quarterly Newsletter for the Education Community

From the Editors

Whether we live in a large city or a small town, in an urban area or in the country, we have all been troubled by the headlines about child abuse. This issue focuses on the implications of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse of young children. Barbara Lowenthal's article provides a definition of child abuse, offers guidance to educators for recognizing and reporting suspected abuse, and discusses educational implications and the interventions teachers can employ. The article provides readers with excellent resources for their own further study of this important issue.

We would appreciate your responses to this issue and will share them with our readers in future issues of *Focus on PreK & K*. We are already planning for next year with articles in production on the topics of birthday parties and celebrations for 4- and 5-year-olds, and communication with parents of young children. We welcome your ideas as you close one successful school year and plan for the year to come. We wish you a restful and rejuvenating summer!

—R.N. & P.H.

Early Childhood Maltreatment and Educational Implications

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Each year, a growing number of young children are victims of maltreatment. Maltreatment can be in the form of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, as well as neglect. In many cases, children are the victims of more than one type of maltreatment (Tucker, Brady, Harris, & Fraser, 1993). Such traumatic experiences can have many negative physical and emotional consequences that significantly affect academic achievement. Teachers have not only a moral and legal responsibility to report suspected abuse, but also a personal responsibility to create classroom environments in which maltreated youngsters can be successful, and feel respected and valued.

Definitions of Child Abuse

Coster and Cicchetti (1993), Cappelleri, Eckenrode, and Powers (1993), and Eckenrode, Laird, and Doris (1993) all have provided definitions of child abuse. These include the following:

- Sexual abuse includes a variety of actions involving both contact and noncontact. Contact abuse is sexual contact with a youngster (i.e., molestation with genital contact, fondling, intercourse, oral or anal sex, and object intrusion). Noncontact abuse includes forcing the child to watch pornographic films, to observe sexual intercourse, and to observe sexual exhibitionism.
- Physical abuse is a nonaccidental, nonsexual, and physical injury to a child that occurs as the result of caretaker behaviors. Boys are more likely to suffer physical abuse than girls (Coster & Cicchetti, 1993).

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• Emotional abuse includes any behavior by an adult that is designed to control a child through the use of shame, fear, continuous criticism, and/or humiliation. Emotional maltreatment is often accompanied by other forms of abuse, but sometimes is inflicted by itself.
• Neglect occurs when the caretaker does not provide adequate supervision, education, and/or medical care, or exposes the child to dangerous environments.

Signs of Child Abuse

Teachers of young children need to be aware of signs of child abuse. Abused youngsters will not always talk freely of their maltreatment. Brodkin and Coleman (1994) and Stone (1994) list the following signs of child abuse:

Signs of physical abuse include:
• Unexplained bruises, cuts, welts, bite marks, burns, or fractures.
• The child's description of an injury is inconsistent with the nature of it.
• The student reports an injury inflicted by his or her caretaker.
• The child appears extremely fearful.

Signs of sexual abuse include:
• An abrupt change in behavior.
• Seductive behavior with other youngsters and adults.
• Inappropriate sexual touching or reluctance to be touched by an adult.
• A knowledge of sex that is inappropriate for the child's age.
• The youngster appears isolated, depressed, and often angry.
• The student complains of itching, bleeding, or bruises around the genital area.

Signs of neglect include:
• Unattended medical problems.
• Inappropriate dress, hygiene, or an unkempt appearance.
• A lack of supervision by the caretaker for long periods of time.
• Hunger or fatigue.
• Evidence of a caretaker's drug or alcohol abuse.

Signs of emotional abuse include:
• Intense fears, anger, and/or depression.
• An impaired sense of self-worth.
• Failure to thrive.
• Extremes of behavior, such as being extremely compliant and passive or extremely aggressive.
• Delayed physical, emotional, or intellectual development.

Maltreated children also may isolate themselves, feeing unworthy to interact with their peers; and they may encounter peer rejection.

Guidelines for Reporting Abuse

In the U.S., every states has legislation that requires reporting of suspected neglect and abuse of children (McIntyre, 1990). The obligation to report applies to anyone whose profession involves the care of children, including, but not limited to, school personnel, truant officers, health care professionals, child care providers, social workers, and employees of the state department of social services. In addition, all states allow anyone to report (Besharov, 1994).

A report is a request for an investigation into suspected maltreatment. The individual making the report is not required to prove that the abuse is happening. Teachers who make a report in good faith are free from personal liability. They are not expected to verify that the abuse is occurring, only to have a reasonable suspicion of child abuse. Failure to report on the part of a mandated reporter may result in criminal prosecution or other sanctions. In practice, however, such sanctions occur infrequently.

Twelve states have provided civil or criminal penalties for a false and malicious report of child maltreatment (Sedlak, 1991). Many states require the reporting of the abuse to protective agencies in addition to law enforcement services, and they specify a time limit for reporting (usually within 24 hours). Teachers need to contact state or local child welfare agencies to find out about their state's definitions of child abuse and the procedures for reporting it.

According to several studies by McIntyre (1990), most teachers are sensitive to the needs of abused or neglected youngsters and wish to assist them. However, teachers often lack information about reporting procedures, and/or their fears of harassment by angry caretakers or suspected abusers may prevent them from reporting the suspected abuse. In comparison with nurses and social workers, educators appear to be the least informed group and the least prepared to assist

the child victims. McIntyre (1990) reported that 81 percent of a sample group of teachers had no preservice training about child maltreatment, and that 66 percent of these teachers complained that they had received no inservice training.

Training efforts need to be improved so that all forms of maltreatment are described and explanations provided about nonpunitive protective procedures. Cooperation among school personnel, protective services, and law enforcement agencies needs to be enhanced because of their inter-related responsibilities in dealing with maltreatment. Finally, each educator should take personal responsibility to become more informed about the issue of child maltreatment and reporting requirements. This information can be obtained through reading relevant journals, such as the *Journal of Child Abuse and Neglect* and the *Journal of Child Development;* consulting with other professionals; and joining pertinent organizations (e.g., the National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse).

Because teachers are expected to report child abuse, they should be aware of the following:

• Almost all states require the reporting of abuse within 24 hours. Determination of whether the abuse has occurred is made by Child Protective Services (Department of Social Services).
• A detailed record of the observed signs of child abuse should be placed in the student's file. Depending on the situation, the teacher also may discuss the situation with the parents or caretakers and the child victims, to facilitate their understanding of the abusive events.
• Often, professional assistance and counseling will be required.
• If appropriate, parenting programs can be recommended to the parents by the proper mental health professionals (McClare, 1990; McIntyre & Cowell, 1989).

Each educator should take personal responsibility to become more informed about the issue of child maltreatment and reporting requirements.

Educational Implications

Child abuse often leads to difficulties in psychological adjustment and in school achievement. Many studies have shown that maltreated students, on the average, score lower on cognitive measures and demonstrate poorer school performance than their nonabused peers of similar socioeconomic backgrounds (Hoffman-Plotkin & Twentyman, 1984; Vondra, Barnett, & Cicchetti, 1989, 1990).

A number of studies on child-caregiver attachment have indicated that negative interactions between the children and the caregivers may account for some of this poor school performance (Aber & Allen, 1987; Cassidy, 1988; Vondra et al., 1989). Youngsters with caring parents or caregivers learn to view themselves as lovable, worthy, and competent in school-related and other cognitive tasks. However, children of abusive caregivers may see themselves as unworthy of love or caring and incompetent in school performance. Abusive parenting often leads to a loss of self-esteem and a lack of motivation to achieve academically. Abused toddlers often respond more negatively than their nonabused peers to their mirror images and make fewer positive statements about themselves (Aber, Allen, & Cicchetti, 1989). By preschool age, certain behaviors appear to be associated with different types of maltreatment. In a study by Erickson, Egeland, and Pianta (1989), physically abused preschoolers demonstrated more noncompliant

behavior than their nonabused peers of similar socioeconomic backgrounds. The maltreated children also were more disorganized and were less successful on preacademic tasks. They did not have the necessary social and work skills. Almost half of the physically abused students were referred for special education or retention. Similarly, emotionally abused young children displayed more angry, noncompliant behavior and a lack of persistence in their schoolwork.

Patterns of behavior characteristic of the sexually abused children in the Erickson et al. (1989) study included extreme inattentiveness and difficulty in following directions. Their social behavior ranged from being withdrawn to being extremely aggressive, with the result of being rejected by their classmates. A striking characteristic of these children was their strong need for their teachers' affection. Their dependent behaviors seemed to reflect their roles as victims at home.

Several studies have demonstrated that neglected children display the most severe problems (Cicchetti, Toth, & Hennessy, 1989; Eckenrode et al., 1993; Mash & Wolfe, 1991). They were the least successful on cognitive tasks in kindergarten compared with the other types of abused children. They also were more nervous, inattentive, and apathetic, and had more difficulty concentrating on preacademic work. The neglected children relied heavily on their teachers for support and affection. Socially, they exhibited both withdrawn and aggressive behavior and were not liked by their peers. These children rarely displayed positive affect or joy. A majority of these neglected children were retained or referred for special education. The research suggests that this poor performance could have been due to the lack of positive stimulation at home; the children did not have opportunities to acquire the necessary social and preacademic skills for success at school. Several studies have demonstrated that, at later ages, all types of maltreated children demonstrate more cognitive deficits and are considered more at risk for school failure and dropout than their classmates who are not maltreated (Hoffman-Plotkin & Twentyman, 1984; Kurtz, Gaudin, Wodarski, & Howing, 1993; Reyome, 1993).

Two studies compared the characteristics of physically abused, sexually abused, and neglected school-age children (Eckenrode et al., 1993; Kurtz et al., 1993). The physically abused students displayed significant school problems. They performed poorly in all academic subjects, especially in mathematics and language skills. Also, they were more likely to be retained than were their nonmaltreated classmates. In adolescence, they were at risk for dropping out of school. Both teachers and parents reported that these children had more behavioral problems than their nonabused peers; however, they did show more competence in adaptive living skills. Many abusive parents expect immediate compliance in self-help and community living skills.

Teachers confirmed that pupils suffering from neglect were performing below grade level and that their rate of school absenteeism was nearly five times that of the nonneglected students. Neglect seems to have more of a long-term impact on academic performance than other forms of maltreatment. However, the adaptive skills of the neglected group was within normal limits. Perhaps these youngsters learned survival skills out of necessity because of the lack of care in their homes. Sexually abused children, on the other hand, appeared similar to nonabused youngsters in academic performance and number of discipline problems. Although sexual abuse has negative social-emotional consequences, its influence on academic achievement was not evident in these studies.

Interventions Teachers Can Employ

Teachers are in unique positions to identify child maltreatment because of the amount of time they spend with their students. Teachers need to provide a classroom environment that is safe, nurturing, and responsive to the needs of maltreated youngsters. Although the classroom is structured for learning, a child's ability to perform is dependent on whether his/her basic needs are met. Many abused children have been deprived of their basic psychological needs, such as safety, trust, love, and a feeling of belonging. Teachers can help meet these needs through providing a classroom environment in which maltreated children can feel respected, valued, and competent (Bear, Schenk, & Buckner, 1993).

Some strategies that teachers can use to assist these children include:

• Projecting an accepting, caring attitude that does not place blame on the student.
• Honoring the confidentiality of a disclosure about abuse to protect the student.
• Watching for cues regarding how to respond when a child confides about maltreatment; the student may want to be physically comforted or may not want to be touched.
• Developing skills in active listening, such as paraphrasing what the child has confided, in order to give the student a chance to correct the teacher if he or she has misperceived the information. Nonjudgmental and supportive listening is crucial (Cicchetti et al., 1989).

Sometimes, youngsters try to keep the abuse secret and to repress their emotional turmoil. As a result, they may try to be perfect students or may behave aggressively at school. Both of these behaviors can disguise the actual problem. Teachers should try to understand the reasons behind these behaviors, especially if they suspect child maltreatment.

Teachers can support abused children by setting reasonable goals so that the target students will feel confident and successful. These students are likely to feel that they do not have control over their environments. To help them gain control, teachers can structure the class setting so that everyone knows the routine and comprehends the rules. To help children develop self-esteem, teachers can emphasize their strengths, abilities, and contributions to the class. In order to facilitate a sense of belonging, the educator can display the target students' work on bulletin boards, include them as much as possible in class discussions, and teach necessary social skills (Gootman, 1993).

Other recommendations for educating maltreated children have been proposed by Cicchetti et al. (1989). Once the abuse is known, interventions must be started as soon as possible. Quick action by a team of social workers, counselors, and psychologists can lessen the damage from the abuse. The specific nature of the interventions should be based on the type of maltreatment and the developmental age of the child.

In addition, the classroom needs to be structured so that aggressive stimuli are lessened. Cooperative rather than competitive learning should be emphasized. Teachers need to be clear in their expressions of emotions such as happiness, sadness, or anger. Expressing anger in words rather than by physical aggression is a skill that can be directly taught and modeled. Instruction in problem solving can help abused children achieve a sense of control over their lives. Establishing consistent and brief negative consequences when rules are broken can help reduce maltreated students' anxieties at school. Negative consequences should not be combined with positive expressions of regard for the student. Many abused youngsters receive confusing messages from their families. For example, a parent could be abusive one moment and overly affectionate the next minute in order to obtain compliance from the child. Therefore, the teacher should not use a confusing method of discipline such as removing the child from an activity while at the same time expressing a positive sentiment such as, "You know how much I think of you." The emphasis should be on positive reinforcement as much as possible through the recognition of the child's efforts and successes.

Another important intervention is the involvement of parents in the treatment process. Abusive parents need to be educated about normal child development so that they will have appropriate expectations of their children and interact with them in more positive ways. The more knowledgeable these caretakers are about appropriate parenting skills, the less likely they are to continue their abuse. It is essential for the teacher to give positive feedback to these parents about their children in order to enhance their positive perceptions of their youngsters' abilities.

It may be a natural tendency to regard abusive caretakers with hostility, but it is more useful for teachers to see them as human beings in need of therapeutic services. Teachers need to know about these services in their communities so that they can refer the parents when necessary. Remember, however, if educators have knowledge of the abuse, it is essential for them to report it immediately to the appropriate agencies.

Conclusion

Teachers probably will have several child victims in their classrooms during their years of teaching.

Educators have many opportunities to help these students gain more self-esteem and positive feelings of being loved and respected by others. Teachers need to show their concern for these youngsters not only because of legal requirements, but also because they are in unique positions to help.

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From the Vice President

education systems in Finland and New Zealand

ACEI educators have excellent opportunities to become familiar with, and to assess, education systems from around the world. We all have much to learn from each other. Recently, my graduate students and I sent an E-mail survey to all ACEI country presidents. We were interested in knowing the guidelines that different countries use in their early childhood programs. The purpose of my research is to gain knowledge of national guidelines of early childhood education, and to compare those guidelines with those used in the United States (such as the NAEYC guidelines).

At the moment I am on sabbatical in New Zealand, which is giving me an excellent opportunity to compare this country's system with Finland's education policy. I am very impressed by how much diversity is appreciated in New Zealand, and also by how appreciated children and services for children are. Professionals from diverse settings have helped develop the new curriculum for early childhood services. The government has made early childhood education a top priority, which is illustrated by an increase in funding for early childhood services by 92 percent over the past decade! Currently, the government is focusing on raising standards and quality. New Zealand has a fairly new quality improvement system that involves management, educators, and parents evaluating early childhood services.

After getting more and more familiar with this system, I see the Finnish education system in a new light. I see its strengths and weaknesses more clearly. I am proud of the early childhood system in Finland. It is affordable and available for all children before they begin compulsory school. I am also proud of the level of teacher training. In Finland, only trained teachers are allowed to teach young children. Also, I am proud that education is free from the primary through university levels.

But I am not proud of minimal regulation and minimal guidance, in everything from curriculum issues to administration of the system. In Finland, private enterprise is more and more "in fashion," and it makes it easier for money to influence the education system. In New Zealand, I appreciate how the government takes responsibility for the children in their country. I hope that we will get new members to ACEI from New Zealand to share with us their experiences in policy development. Through interaction with other societies, ACEI members will have a better basis from which to support each other, as well as to develop our own systems.

—Eeva Hujala, Vice President
Representing Infancy/Early Childhood

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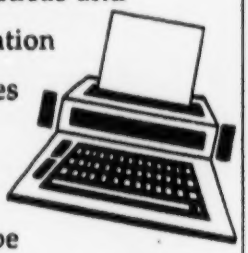

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Focus on Pre-K & K
Summer 2000, Vol. 12, No. 4

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